

PANDITA RAMABAI

Mrs. Coan Tells of the Hindoo Woman.

MEETING OF THE WOMAN'S BOARD

Letters From Various Persons Interested in Board Work.

THE Woman's Board of Missions held its regular monthly meeting yesterday afternoon at 2:30 in the parlors of Central Union Church with an attendance of about forty members. One of the features of the meeting was the reading of an article on Pandita Ramabai, the Hindoo woman who has done so much for her countrywomen in India.

The meeting was opened by a reading of Scripture by Miss Chamberlain, who presided. She spoke feelingly of the capture and detention of Miss Stone by Bulgarian brigands and she expressed an earnest hope that by the destiny of events the true light of the Christian gospel would make progress in that country. She also referred to the death in California of Mrs. Adie, formerly of Hilo, a Christian worker in that city.

Miss Chamberlain also read a letter from Mrs. C. M. Hyde, who is now returning to Honolulu with her daughter, after an extended tour of Europe. She hopes to be back in Honolulu sometime this month.

A letter from Mrs. Agnes Judd and one from Miss Judd were also read. A program of the proceedings of the Hartford convention of the Woman's Board was enclosed, also one of the Pittsfield (Mass.) meeting, where Hawaii was represented by Miss Nellie Judd.

The treasurer's report showed receipts for November amounting to \$39.50, and large expenditures, which cut down the balance on hand to \$147.35.

A letter was read from Mrs. Anna R. Foster from Agana, Guam, where she and her husband and children went from here as missionaries. A church building was about ready for occupancy when she wrote in October. They were living in an old house, while a new one was being built.

Mrs. G. M. Whitney also read a letter from Mrs. Hyde in which she told of her travels and the days and weeks she and her daughter had spent in London, Paris, Munich, Berlin, Dresden and in Holland.

Mrs. Edith Lyons, wife of Prof. Lyons, formerly of Oahu College, wrote a descriptive letter of her work among Polish people in the east, and of the conversion of Jews to the Christian faith.

Miss Laura Green reported on her work among the Hawaiians. She told of her visits to the houses of people of many creeds, and was pleased to have been received by all in a kindly spirit. She had made seventy-one calls during the month and was becoming especially interested in slum work in Kakaako. She had found numerous families there from Maui, where she had formerly resided, but was grieved to see that many of them had slipped into indifference as to their faith or had done something even worse.

The Japanese work in the city was told of. It was stated that the Home for Japanese Women was completed and there were several inmates. The women are generally those who go out to service and were without homes.

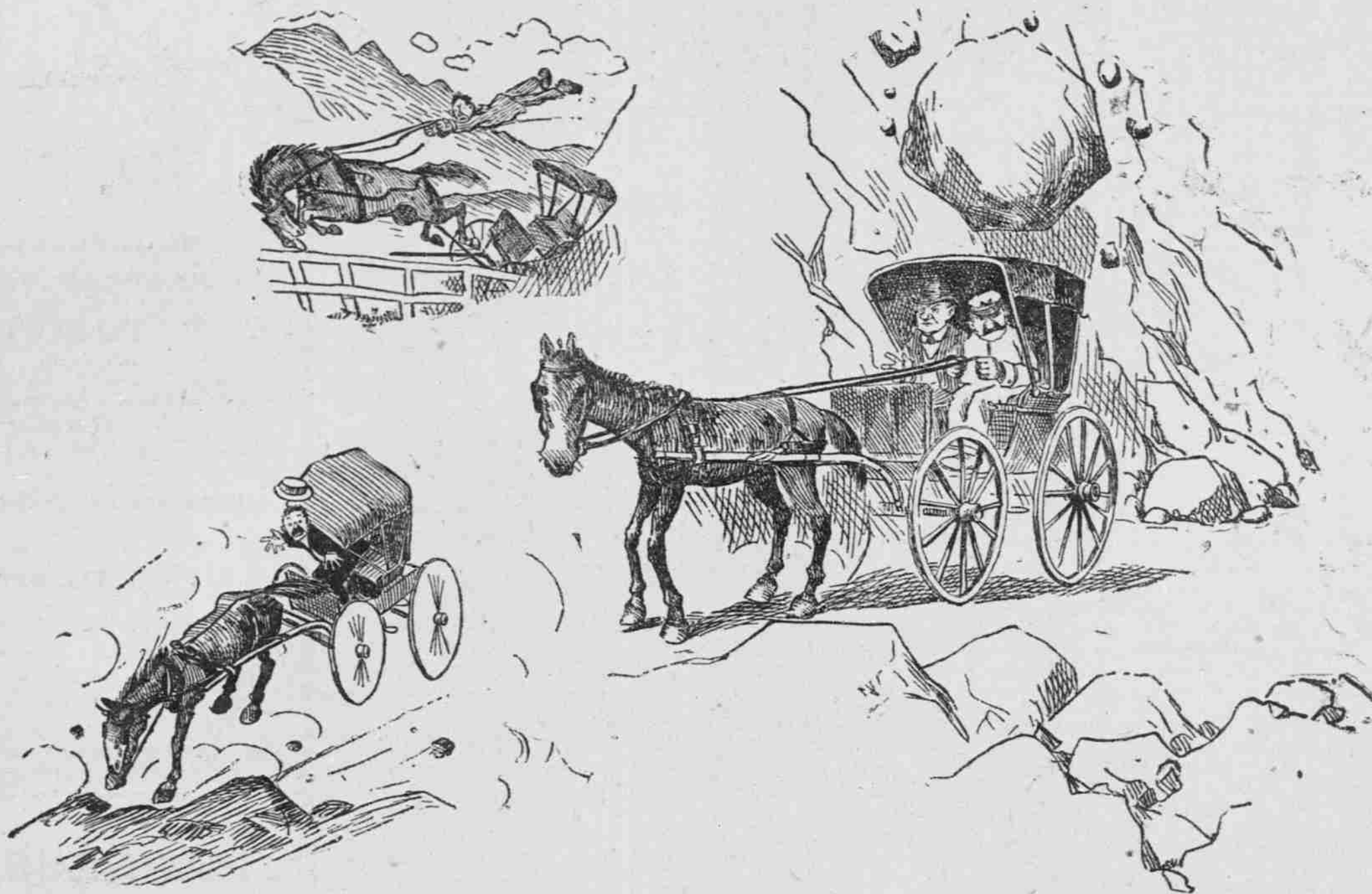
It was also reported that the wife of the Japanese man who strangled his little child several months ago, was in the Japanese hospital, her nervous system wrecked by the occurrence. It was feared for a while that she would lose her mind, but that critical stage has passed. She is being cared for by Mr. Okumura.

Mrs. Coan then read the following address, which was listened to with rapt attention, as a collection is to be raised at the next meeting to send to this wonderful little woman spoken of:

PANDITA RAMABAI AND HER MISSION.

I am away in the jungle of the Western Ghats of India, at the source of one of her great rivers, there stood, some fifty years ago, a rude dwelling which the learned Ananta Shastri had built as a home for himself and his nine-year-old

PLEASURE AT THE PALI.



TOLD IN MANILA CLUBS BY AN OFFICER OF THE COPTIC

When one looks at Mr. Harper of the Critic he sees a very pleasant, courteous gentleman; but there is nothing about his appearance that would lead you to believe that he has undergone one of the severest trials that it is possible for a human being to undergo. Nevertheless this is perfectly true for Harper is one of the fortunate eight who were rescued from among the passengers of the ill-fated "Rio" on which poor Harry Seymour went down.

On that eventful night off the Golden Gate he went through all the mental agony that seems to rend man's heart, soul and body when death stares him in the face. He saw gallant Captain Ward throw up his hands, fall heavily against the mizzen mast, and cry hoarsely "For God's sake save the women." He saw Harry Seymour arranging his necktie three minutes previous to the fatal plunge that carried the "Rio" and her passengers to an unknown grave. He saw sailors, their lips firmly set, working at the boats when they knew that their task was hopeless. He saw mothers showering kisses on their babies for the last time. He saw Consul General Wildman vainly striving to save his wife, children and the tin box containing papers to be delivered to the authorities at Washington. He saw young American girls who had remained up during the night to catch the first glimpse of God's country offering up the last prayers—and all this while he felt the gentle swaying of the vessel as she settled nearer and nearer to her grave, and worse than all knew that he could not swim a stroke. Here is his own story as he related it at the Press Club the other night.

"We had been playing poker in the smoking room and when I reached my room I was so tired that I merely took off my Tuxedo and trousers and threw myself in the upper berth. I had barely fallen asleep when I was awakened by a violent lurch and a grating sound as if the ship had brushed up against the side of a dock. I knew this was not possible, and surmising danger, I

25,000,000 of them, most of whom are down-trodden and ostracized? Over these, her sisters in the great family of humanity, Ramabai's heart yearned with pity, and with longing to aid and uplift. She would reconsecrate her life to service in their behalf. We find her, then, travelling from city to city, lecturing, writing and translating, urging upon the English government that they should have women teachers for girls' schools and that provision should be made for the study of medicine by women.

"It is such a great step," she writes, "for a Hindu woman to cross the sea; one cuts oneself always off from one's family and friends. I knew this was not the same voice that bade one of old to leave his father's country, and she crossed the sea to England. A Church of England Sisterhood gave her welcome, and remaining with them a year, she acquired the English language, and so learned of Christ that she confessed herself a follower, and with her little daughter, received baptism. We cannot linger over this period of her life, when for a time she was a student, and then professor of Sanskrit in the Cheltenham Ladies' College, but will with her cross the sea, and land upon American shores, a second 'great step' in the way this rare woman is treading. What she saw of the work of the public schools, and of woman's share in the education of boys and girls, impressed her greatly, while inspection of the Philadelphia Kindergarten kindled her enthusiasm to the point of enrolling herself among the pupils of the kindergarten training school. The few weeks Ramabai had purposed spending in the States passed on into a period

of nearly three years. 'Wondrous possibilities' of what she might yet be able to do for India's little widows rose in vision before her, and most earnestly she set herself to the task of attaining the possible. She wrote of her knowledge about the terrible customs and systems of child marriage and child widows, and published the book, 'The High-Caste Hindu Woman.' Journeying hither and thither, from one state to another, she sought the attention and enlisted the sympathy of public audiences, or drawing room circles. Always earnest, always sincere and humble, she aroused enthusiasm and secured the confidence of those who heard her story. I cannot better tell her final success than by quoting the words of another.

"At an overflowing meeting held in Boston in May, 1887, when the audience was moved to tears and laughter by her pathetic and keen wit, a provisional committee of women was formed to consider Ramabai's plans, to act with her and report later."

The report was accepted, officers were elected, the constitution was adopted, and Ramabai saw her long cherished plan take definite form. That night her joy was too great for sleep; when found sobbing in her room, she exclaimed: 'I am crying for joy that my dream of years has become a reality.' The president and vice presidents of the association comprised members of five denominations; the board of trustees, composed of some of the best known business and professional men of Boston, was equally unsectarian, as was the executive committee, formed entirely of women."

When Ramabai returned to India she very soon opened a Widow's Home in Bombay, over whose portal she placed the legend, "Sharada Sadan" (Abode of Wisdom). Two pupils entered. Three times had one of them attempted to end her misery by suicide, and only the fear of being again born a woman had stayed her purpose. As Poona was a healthier city than Bombay, and living was cheaper there, the school was removed thither and established in a commodious bungalow.

A lover of the beautiful in nature, Ramabai has sought to make this retreat most charming in its surroundings. Shading trees, fragrant flowers, brilliant shrubs, ferns and fountain lend their beauty for the uplifting of the "suffering sisters." As she shows her visitors about the home she says: "This is not an institution in which all the best rooms are reserved for the teaching staff. My pupils are free to come and go. The Sadan with all its privileges has been instituted for their benefit. They come from homes where they have been treated as outcasts, where no love has been bestowed upon them, and no comforts provided for them. I wish them to see the contrast in all things where love rules." That we, too, may "see the contrast," let us glance at scenes through which they had passed before coming to the Sharada Sadan. They have been stripped of pleasant apparel and clad in one garment

(Continued on page 13.)



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